

Miscellaneous
pamph. bearing
on the World war

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Roumania

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← v. 18, no. 1-2

Roumania
Title
The World War, miscellaneous papers
for v. 18
Eur. war, etc. - Roumania

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FOR THE
AMERICAN ROUMANIAN SOCIETY

Y 15 Jan 21, 20



THE ROUMANIAN CAUSE.

A clear statement of just what Roumania wants at the Peace Conference, and why it wants it, is indispensable to a complete understanding of that country's racial and political history, and vice versa. Publicity has been given to slanderous intimations that for a prize of territory and vain political aspirations, Roumania sordidly rushed to the support of freedom's cause. Undoubtedly a frank and impartial resumé of just a few of the facts in Roumania's favor, relating to her history, to her population, to her social and economic conditions and to her ideals will serve toward the absolute refutation of any possible aspersions upon that country's national honor and integrity, as well as enlighten to some considerable extent and possibly revise some existing international views upon the Roumanian problem.

The Roumanian situation is an important problem which America, with her allies, must consider when they finally gather to complete the details of a world made safe for democracy. At that table around which those distinguished envoys shall gather, Roumania does not ask for mere territory; she asks not for vain political aggrandisement; she only asks for that for which the war was won—JUSTICE. Her ideal, her cause, her only hope is the union of Roumanians under Roumania, national autonomy, democratic progress, political freedom for the promotion of the common welfare, and the absolute eradication of a system of despotism which has existed under the Hungarian political system.

Surely, therefore, a plain statement of Roumania's cause is its own good and sufficient justification. Let us consider for just a moment who and what are the Roumanians. The Roumanian nation numbers about fifteen millions of people, slightly more than half of whom live in Roumania as it was bounded previously to the war, by Austria and Russia to

the north, by the Black Sea to the east, and Hungary, Serbia and Bulgaria to the west and south, with access also through the mouths of the Danube to the Black Sea. It will thus be seen that it is situated in the center approximately of the mediæval pathway of commerce and travel from the Byzantine Empire to the towns of the north, and that it is only reasonable to expect that it will again be one of the gateways on the path of commerce and progress stimulated by post-war activity. Forty per centum of the Roumanian millions have been living under the yoke of Austro-Hungarian oppression and Russian domination. The number admitted by the Hungarian authorities would be three million Roumanians, but Hungarian statistics are shamelessly falsified, as the Germans themselves acknowledged before the war, and it is certain the Roumanian population in Hungary, before the war, totaled not much less than four million. For instance, the basis of division between the Magyars of Hungary and the Roumanians was made a linguistic one rather than an ethnological one, and the facts being that the Roumanian language had been suppressed for several years, and the peasantry enslaved, it was not indicative of much that many thousands said that they "preferred to speak Hungarian." That, under the circumstances, was equivalent to saying that they preferred to be let alone. All small children and all mutes were labeled "Hungarian."

The modern Roumanian is a blend of two stocks, the Dacians who were conquered by Emperor Trajan at the close of the first century, and the Romans. The language and many of the popular customs show their Roman ancestry, of which they are very proud. The names of many localities in Transylvania bear evidence to the fact that the Roumanian claim of first inhabiting Transylvania is well founded.

Geographically, the old Roman conquered province of Dacia in which is now Roumania and Roumanians, was composed of Transylvania, Maramuresh, Crishana and the Banat of Temesvar, of which districts the Roumanians now

represent one-half of the total population and particularly predominate in the rural districts where the Saxons are losing prominence. Then there are Moldavia and Wallachia to which the Roumanians were driven from Transylvania when the province fell under the Hungarians during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and which, now in the shape of a boot, constitute Roumania proper. Dobrogea furnishes access to the Black Sea, while Bessarabia to the northeast, since 1878 under Russian domination, now, of its own accord, has, with its three million inhabitants, joined again with Roumania. Let us not forget, also, Bucowina, which with its three hundred thousand Roumanians was lost to Austria in 1775, just the year before the first American Fourth of July.

THE ROUMANIAN KINGDOM.

Having before us now a rather kaleidoscopic panorama of the population and where it is, we should consider briefly some of the historical facts unequivocally supporting Roumania's just cause.

In the first place, we know that the Romanized population of Dacia was forced into the foothills and then into the higher lands of Transylvania by the barbarians who ravaged Europe and did not stop at the walls of Rome. It is too well known for comment here how continual association under peculiar geographical and climatical conditions, separated more or less from constant touch with other peoples tends to influence lingual characteristics, temperament, customs, and even ideals. Thus, while the Roumanians, shut in their mountainous abode, were evolving something resembling but not quite approaching national sentiment, the invading Magyars from the tenth to the thirteenth century subjected gradually the pre-existing Roumanian duchies, and, through that superstitious dread which has always served ignorant barbarians in lieu of more intelligent respect, they did not in their contact with Roumanian civilization entirely destroy it, but rather adopted

some of the customs, retained some of the terms of Latin derivation, accepted some of the nobles and helped to develop the existing feudal system. This quite naturally resulted in oppression of the conquered race. The Magyars were newly won adepts to the Catholic faith, while the Roumanians adhered to the orthodox belief. Religious intolerance was followed by rigorous persecution which was directly responsible for the founding by the nobility of the Transylvanian duchies across the mountains of the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, now modern Roumania.

As a barter for unhampered internal development without which she could do nothing for either herself or her extra territorial people, Roumania proper temporized with the Central Powers and discouraged nationalist tendencies for a time. However, as the late King Carol said, "No nation ever consents to be bereaved of its political aspirations." Moreover, the internal development was not unhampered by Magyar jingoism nor by the aggressive political and foreign policy of Austria-Hungary.

The war has left the situation practically unchanged except that the hopes of the Roumanians, together with admitted valiant achievements on the battlefield, have attained a climax.

The influence of the landed nobility, "the boeri," was all-powerful in Roumania until the reigning prince, Alexander Cuza, about the year 1860 forced land reform laws, procured universal suffrage—an untimely measure which later had to be rescinded—and passed protective legislation to prevent unwise alienation of the peasants' lands. The period of restriction against alienation was temporarily extended in 1914 by the war.

The voters were divided into three colleges or classes, graded by wealth and education, illiterate peasants being allowed to vote only through delegates. This method of representation seemed to the advanced parties unsatisfactory and inadequate, and the general elections of 1913 brought into power a majority pledged to a much extended franchise. This was emphasized by the King's address at

Iashi (Jassy) last December before the Roumanian Parliament, when he said:

"The peasants should know that they are fighting for national unity as well as for political and economic freedom. Their valor gives them still stronger rights to the soil they have been defending, and imposes on us more strongly than ever the duty of carrying through, when the war is over, the agrarian and electoral reforms on the basis of which this representative assembly was elected."

The world is beginning to recognize the international importance of the Roumanian situation not only along economic lines of progress, but also politically. It is true that Roumania has largely benefited in the past from German capital and German science, that being a good business deal for Germany, but they, of course, never received any encouragement in their fight for national unity against Hungarian oppression. Under the geographical situation in which that country is placed, she must, like Italy, be either the ally or the enemy of Germany, and it is, therefore, incumbent upon the allies to insist upon the realization of the legitimate aspirations of the Roumanians toward national unity for which they risked their entire interest. It is from France, Great Britain, Italy and the United States that Roumania has drawn its political and spiritual inspiration and it is to those countries at the peace table that Roumania looks for justice and freedom.

The political situation of the past explains why during the present war the Roumanians of Transylvania deserted the Austro-Hungarian armies and entered the armies of the allies or the armies of Roumania. Connected with the fight of the Transylvanian Roumanians for their freedom was in the last century the struggle of the Roumanians from Bucowina. The history of this province is different from that of Transylvania. She was always a part of the Moldavian principality; even the capital of Moldavia was in the present Bucowina. Austria took it from Moldavia in 1775 by bribing the Turkish and Russian delegates. From that time the Roumanians, three hundred thousand people, had to

suffer the same oppression as their Transylvanian kinsmen. The difficulty was that while the Transylvanian Roumanians were oppressed by the Hungarians the Roumanians of Bucovina were oppressed by the Austro-German officials of the Hapsburg emperors.

TRANSYLVANIA AND THE BANAT.

Since the thirteenth century the Roumanian peasants of Transylvania that had not followed their chieftains across the mountain border, suppressed by the Magyars, Szeklers and Saxons, have attempted many revolts and their history is full of pitiful struggles to throw off masters who refused to regard them as more than serfs. In 1784, there was a peasant revolt led by Horea, who was broken on the rack. The right of petition was denied to them and more revolts followed. But the peasantry who formed the backbone of the revolt were handicapped by absolute lack of experience, by lack of a national ideal, and by lack of a capable leader.

One of the myriads of lessons we learn from the philosophy of history is that no nation can succeed, the aspirations of whose people are not encouraged and strengthened by some national sentiment or unity to which those people can give expression. The Roumanians found theirs in the following manner: in consideration for certain privileges guaranteed by the Hapsburg Emperor, Leopold I, a part of the Roumanian clergy in Hungary was led in the thirteenth century to recognize the supremacy of the Roman Church, and the result was the establishment of the Uniate Church whose priests were allowed to visit Rome and who there by direct and personal contact with the glories of that ancient city were brought to realize vividly that the Roumanians were part and parcel of the great neo-latin commonwealth. Returning to their homes, they, by their scholarly addresses and instructions, developed the national sentiment. Teaching centers sprang up and the cry soon was, "Let the Hungarians go to their own lands and leave Roumanian soil for Roumanians." As usual, this spirit of

liberty provoked a stern repression, but the causes which created it remained and it was not long before the wave of national revival spread into Moldavia and Wallachia.

So, when the first wave of national revival sprang up, we learn that Transylvanian Roumanians were just as much, if not more, the source of it than the Roumanians themselves. Lazar, a Transylvanian Roumanian, established the first school that was national, in Bucarest in 1817. This school became a place for pilgrimage and indirectly resulted not only in the creation of a national press but in the formation of a society for the propagation of the national ideal, stated in our opening paragraph. More Transylvanian teachers were procured. A Roumanian from Transylvania wrote the first dictionary. A Transylvanian poet wrote the national song, "Wake up, Roumanians, from your sleep of death." The consequent revolutionary movement was suppressed in 1848 by Turkey and Russia. Meanwhile, the Magyars were at war with Austria and had drawn up a constitution incorporating Transylvania—an autonomous principality since 1526—with Hungary. As the Austrian rulers had always been more favorably disposed toward the Roumanians than the Magyars, the Roumanians were glad to support Austria under the following oath:

TO DEFEND OUR ROUMANIAN LANGUAGE
AND RIGHTS,

TO DEFEND LIBERTY, EQUALITY AND FRA-
TERNITY,

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THESE PRINCIPLES
TO RESPECT THE NATIONALITY OF ALL
THE INHABITANTS OF TRANSYLVANIA,
CLAIMING FROM THEM EQUAL RESPECT
OF MY OWN NATIONALITY,

I WILL NOT ATTEMPT TO DOMINATE ANY-
BODY AND WILL NOT SUFFER MYSELF TO
BE DOMINATED.

The oppression of the American colonists by that German King of England, George III, did not inspire any worthier determination by a determined people to be self-determined.

In the racial war that followed, the Russian troops intervened and put Hungary back under Austrian rule and temporarily the Roumanians were restored to some of their privileges. The inevitable happened finally and in the defeat at Koniggratz in 1867 Austria was forced to give Hungary independence, the dual monarchy began, Transylvania became enslaved to Hungary, and a system of suppression and oppression, political and economic, was resumed.

The policy of the Magyars toward the Roumanians is almost inconceivable on any other than a "Hun" theory that "What is not Magyar, is wrong. It should be, and what will not be Magyar will no longer be allowed to be."

An itemized recital of Magyar outrages on the Roumanians would consume entire chapters. Among other things, they deprived the Roumanians of the right of meeting, allowed no literary or artistic societies; in short, nothing that might tend to unify them. All children from three to five were forced to attend Hungarian schools and receive all their instruction in the hated oppressor's tongue, and the majority of the older pupils were forced by necessity to attend Magyar schools inasmuch as the State gradually shut down all the others. Thus we see that illiteracy was the heritage of independent spirit and therefore a credit instead of a discredit, where we find it among the Roumanians of Hungary. Nevertheless, by extreme sacrifices, they succeeded in still having 5,300 schools by 1905. Unfortunately, in 1907 the passage of the Apponyi law closed down all schools wherein the teaching of "Hungarian" was considered insufficient, 2,800 Rumanian schools being then suppressed. No more than five secondary schools have been allowed to be established.

Human beings can tolerate much as long as they feel that their spirit is free to worship the Supreme Being in their own particular way. The masters found that the church

services were of some value in strengthening the Roumanian nationality in the border zone of mixed nationality between Transylvania and the plain of Hungary proper, and as promptly as that was discovered it was discontinued and the services thenceforth in a part of the Greek Catholic Church were forced to be conducted in Hungarian, all those protesting being imprisoned. The press was, of course, under strict censorship.

It may occur to the reader to ask why the Transylvanian Roumanians did not attempt in some constitutional manner to redress their wrongs or improve their condition. The fact was that they were defrauded of almost every electoral privilege in the first place by electoral laws special to Transylvania and much more restrictive than those of Hungary proper, and secondly, by unexampled pressure and governmental terrorism, which explains why, according to Hungarian statements, it was necessary to employ "only 194 battalions of infantry and 114 squadrons of cavalry" to preserve order at the 1910 Transylvanian election.

BESSARABIA.

Bessarabia, somewhat more than 17,000 square miles in extent, has natural boundaries on practically all sides, viz., the River Pruth to the West, the Danube and Black Sea to the south, and the River Dniester to the north and east. The only undefined boundary is the small neck of land to the northwest. A glance at the map will show that Bessarabia is bordered on three sides by Roumanian lands.

The rulers of Wallachia (southern Roumania of today) from earliest history to the eighteenth century belonged to the great house of Bessarabia. The Bessarabs, in the fourteenth century, occupied not only Wallachia and Dobrogea but also the plains north of the Danube delta.

When the Turks invaded this country in the fifteenth century and found the power in the hands of the Bessarabs, they gave it the name of Bessarabia.

In 1465, Stephen the Great, most famous of the Princes

of Moldavia, defeated the Wallachian contemporary, drove him from southern Bessarabia, and took possession of the ports of Kilia and Cetatea Alba (now Akkerman). These ports proved of great value to the Moldavians, who traded largely through them (by means of Genoese merchants) with western Europe. However, Moldavia was later forced to cede these ports to Turkey, who greatly benefited, as they were on her way to the Crimea and Tartary, though Moldavia retained all the country now known as central and northern Bessarabia.

In 1812, by the treaty of Bucharest, Turkey, her representatives being bribed by the Russians, ceded all Bessarabian territory occupied by her, as well as the part of Moldavia east of the Pruth, to Russia. The latter she had no right to do, as Moldavia was autonomous, but Moldavia was too weak to resist.

In 1812, Bessarabia had only 340,000 inhabitants, as the population had been terribly reduced by continuous wars, the plague and cholera. Save for the southeastern portion, where some foreigners settled during Turkish domination, the population was purely Roumanian.

After the defeat of Russia in 1856, the Congress of Paris gave back to Moldavia southern Bessarabia, so as to protect the Danube from the pressure of the Muscovite Empire.

In 1877, when a new war broke out between Russia and Turkey, Roumania, seeing she would be unable to remain neutral, assigned rights to Russia to allow free passage of her armies, and in return Russia pledged herself to respect the "present territorial integrity" of Roumania. The Russians, during the summer, were badly beaten at Plevna and called upon Roumania for help, who nobly responded. Prince Charles was made Commander-in-Chief and forced Osman Pasha, the gallant Turkish leader, to lay down his arms.

Russia, however, broke faith at the end of the war and declared she would again despoil Roumania of Bessarabia, Roumania protested, and France, England and Italy made their appeal to Russia for justice, but to no avail. How-

ever, intervention of the western powers gave back the Dobrogea to Roumania as compensation.

From 1878 to 1917, Bessarabia remained under Russian rule, but when the revolution came the Roumanians in Bessarabia proclaimed their independence (November, 1917) and joined Roumania in April, 1918.

According to Mr. Irodenez, who has made a deep study of the policy of Russia towards her subjected peoples ("La Russie et les peuples allogenes," Bern, 1917), Russia proceeded in Bessarabia as follows:

"At first (1812) Russia pretended friendly relations, and granted a fairly liberal autonomy to the new province. A Roumanian noble, Scarlet Sturdza, was appointed Governor, and a Council of advisers was given him, being a duplicate of the Moldavian diet. Roumanian was the official language, and the Moldavian code of laws (much superior to the Russian code) was in force. However, the liberal régime was of short duration, and in 1816 the Governor's Council was transformed into a "Superior Council" under the supervision of the Russian Governor General. In 1828, the Superior Council was abolished, and finally in 1834, all power vested in the Russian Governor General. At the same time Roumanian was excluded from the courts and administration, though 75 per cent of the population could speak no other language. Furthermore, in 1859, Roumanian was prohibited in the schools, and no books or newspapers could be introduced from Roumania.

In 1861, when the serfs in Russia were liberated, the reform did not affect Bessarabia, for the reason that, with the exception of the gypsies, there were no serfs in Bessarabia or in fact in any Roumanian territory. Other Russian reforms were introduced, but availed nothing, as they did not apply to conditions existing in Bessarabia, and in reality were the means of destroying the last remnants of autonomy that the province still enjoyed."

The 340,000 souls found in Bessarabia in 1812 were practically all Roumanian. The only foreign elements were a few scattered Bulgarians, Cossacks, Jews and Tartars. Rus-

sia, wishing to increase the population and reduce the Roumanian majority, encouraged immigration. In 1814 and 1816, German, French and Swiss colonies were founded and more Bulgarians came in. In 1856, Bessarabia had approximately 1,000,000 people, but the Roumanians still aggregated nearly 70 per cent. The Russian statistics of 1891 give us the following records:

<i>Races.</i>	<i>Numbers.</i>	<i>Percentage.</i>
Roumanians	1,090,000.....	66 %
Ukrainians	215,000.....	13 %
Jews	141,000.....	8.6%
Bulgarians	85,000.....	5 %
Germans	43,000.....	2.6%
Russians	34,000.....	2 %
Gypsies	17,000.....	1 %

The Roumanian percentage would be greater if it were not for the fact that large numbers were deported, and it is estimated that today there are 500,000 Roumanians scattered over southern Russia, the Caucasus, and even as far as Siberia.

The last statistics available give Bessarabia a population of 2,604,800 of which 1,897,800 are Roumanians, and the balance is composed of Ukrainians, Germans, Bulgarians, Poles, Russians, Cossacks, gypsies, etc. The Russians and most of the Ukrainians, however, are there only as railway employees or members of various branches of the Russian administration.

Having shaken off the Russian yoke, Bessarabia will automatically relieve herself of many aliens, as practically all the peasantry and nobles are Roumanians, while the Bourgeoisie largely comprising the people connected with the Government are prevalently non-Roumanian.

That Bessarabia is fundamentally Roumanian is evidenced by the fact that six out of her eight counties have a majority of Roumanians, and, furthermore, as soon as she was free from Russian domination she returned immediately to her ancient allegiance.

As was stated above, at first the Russians did not attempt

to enforce systematic russification. Roumanian was still taught, and Roumanian books published if passed by the Censor. However, Russian schools were soon opened and the Roumanian language excluded. As a result, Bessarabia became one of the most illiterate countries of Europe. Comparative statistics show that ten per cent of the population of free Roumania was in school attendance, while in Bessarabia it was only two per cent. The comparison is even worse than it appears, for illiteracy is far greater in the Roumanian districts than in those where the Germans and Bulgars predominate. German might be taught in the German village schools, while Roumanian was prohibited in all schools without exception.

The peasantry preferred to keep their children from the schools and the effort to Russianize the people failed. However, the Roumanians were plunged into mediæval ignorance, and, while 63 per cent of the Germans could read, not more than 10 per cent of the Roumanians could do so. In free Roumania, however, 60 per cent of the people could read. It is an extraordinary fact that there were books in the library at Kishineo in practically all European languages, though none in the Roumanian tongue that the majority of the people could understand.

The church suffered also, as did the schools. During the early Russian occupation, Roumanian services were allowed, but ere long schools were established for teaching Russian to the clergy, and Roumanian services and music were soon forced to give way. Thus, the church lost its influence on the people, and the clergy were so poorly remunerated that the priests had to spend a greater portion of their time in making a livelihood. The other nationalities, however, especially the Germans, enjoyed much more liberty in church affairs, and their clergy were far better off in a financial way.

However, the spiritual torpor of the Bessarabians did not entirely destroy intellectual desire, and under more favorable conditions, some distinguished men were produced, namely, the historian Bogdan Alexander Hasden, the liter-

ary critic, D. Gherea, and General Averescu, the Roumanian Commander-in-Chief during the great war, and others.

When Russia collapsed, Kerensky proclaimed the right of autonomy to all subjected nationalities. Immediately, Roumanian committees met to organize conditions in Bessarabia, first opening schools to prepare the people for their future work.

On November 3, 1917, a Roumanian government was set up and an Assembly of 147 members, representing the whole population, met November 21st at Kishineo. Fervid manifestations of enthusiasm attended this meeting and the Roumanian flag was hoisted over the Government buildings.

Mr. Niculetz, a Rumanian, now a member of the Roumanian cabinet, was elected president.

A Bessarabian army was organized, schools for teachers were opened, and brighter things seemed to be in store when the Bolsheviks began to loot the province and the people were compelled to call on Roumania for help. Aid was immediately given, and on the 9th of April, 1918, the Bessarabian Assembly unanimously voted for union with Roumania.

The long-felt aspirations of Bessarabia are now fulfilled. Ukrania at first made some objections, but on July 31st, 1918, accepted the situation. A Ukrainian consul has now been appointed at Kishineo. That the allies are favorable to the union of the Bessarabians with their mother-country, and that the peace conference will take cognizance, this redress of a long-standing injury are regarded by Bessarabians as certainties.

THE DOBROGEA.

The territory now known as the Dobrogea is situated at the northeastern extremity of the Balkan Peninsula, and lies between the Danube and the Black Sea. The climate and general aspects remind one of Southern Bessarabia rather than Bulgaria. The southern part of the country is dry, barren plains, while to the northward forests, rivers and

hills appear, and the region of the Danube delta is very fertile. It is distinctly a geographical unit, and has been known by a name of its own since ancient times.

Very early the Greeks began to settle in this province, and they established many cities, which grew famous for their commerce. Then followed the Romans, and from these two elements came the modern Roumanians, who have withstood all invasions from outsiders and remained a hardy people to this day, even though they passed through the most terrible oppression.

Invasion followed invasion. In the seventh century the Bulgarians passed through, then the Varegs, then wandering Turanian tribes. In the eleventh century the country was again under Greek domination, but beset by civil wars soon lost its prestige, and the Turks began their conquest in the fifteenth century and Constanza, the largest port, was taken by them in 1445. Turkish immigrants were brought in from Asia Minor, and for a time things were fairly prosperous, though long Turkish domination began to be the ruination of the province, and by 1774, when the Bulgarians began to arrive in large numbers, the country was in a deplorable state. The Roumanian population, however, had endured well, and were a considerable factor in the country.

The Russians and Turks were constantly at war, and for a time Russia had control of Dobrogea. However, in 1878, Russia annexed Bessarabia, which belonged to Roumania, and the Berlin Congress gave Roumania in return Dobrogea. That properly is only a restitution, because Dobrogea, when the Turks conquered it, was a Roumanian province.

No sooner was the province ceded to Roumania than a great work of reconstruction was begun. Roumanian schools and courts were established, roads were built, a health department (a thing unheard of previously) organized, hospitals and clinics formed, and many other institutions arranged for. The country, which had been previously subjected to raids by bandits, was delivered from these depredations, and travel made safe for all. The Constanza-Cer-

navoda Railway was completed, and a new bridge built over the Danube which is about 18 miles long. It is to be mentioned especially that this bridge is the only one between Belgrade and the Black Sea, a distance of 800 miles.

One of the greatest attainments under Roumanian control is the development of the port of Constanza, which has the finest docks in Europe. These docks were twenty-five years in building, and makes this one of the most important ports in the world. Large tanks have been erected here for the reception of petroleum and its products, which are brought 200 miles by pipe lines. These tanks are fitted with flexible conduits over half a mile long, by means of which the oil is pumped directly to vessels that lie at anchor in the harbor.

This port is sufficiently large to accommodate 50 large vessels at one time. Storage tanks can care for 132,000 metric tons of cereals. In the year previous to the war 1,250,000 metric tons of lumber, petroleum and cereals were exported from Constanza.

Splendid hotels have been erected, and most luxurious vessels ply between the port and Constantinople and Mediterranean ports.

Three hundred and nine common schools have been established since 1879, and several high schools organized.

During the late war the Bulgarians occupied the Dobrogea, and hoped to retain it; finally they were forced to withdraw. Under favorable conditions Dobrogea will prove one of the most valuable provinces in the world.

ROUMANIA AND THE WAR.

Roumania typifies unstinted sacrifice in the cause for which the allies fought so earnestly. While this would be convincingly shown by even a casual reference to the facts, it is very little known to the people of the United States in general.

Two years ago a London newspaper contained a cartoon, illustrating a newsboy in 1935, crying out, "Roumania coming in." This satire indicated the puzzled attitude re-

garding Roumania. The questions uppermost in the public mind were, when and on which side will Roumania enter the great conflict? However, long before 1935, Roumania did "come in" on the side of the allies.

The first question that arises is, "Was it necessary for Roumania to enter the war?" The answer is obviously "Yes."

Other European nations had realized their ideal of concentrating all their people in one state, but there were nearly twice as many Roumanians outside the boundaries of the free Kingdom as within it, which is shown by the following table :

7,000,000	Roumanians in Roumania proper.
4,200,000	in Transylvania, Banat, Bucowina and parts (in Austria Hungary).
2,000,000	in Bessarabia.
1,000,000	in the Governments of Kherson and Podolia in Russia, across the Dniester.
500,000	in Macedonia.
274,000	in Serbia.

These Roumanians outside the Kingdom were outcasts and were subjected to the harshest treatment and persecution, especially in Hungary. For instance, in that country (which boasts of her liberal constitution) they were denied all rights. The Hungarians dreamed of a nation of 20,000,000 Hungarians, while in reality there were only 8,000,000 Hungarians, and they endeavored to Magyarize 14,000,000 Roumanian-Slovaks and Servians by imposition of a most Draconian regime. In devising means to this end the Hungarians are the most adept of any nation in the world. Roumanian representation in the Hungarian parliament was made absolutely impossible.

Freedom of the press was non-existent. If the Roumanian journalists attempted to publish anything in Hungary, they were immediately fined or imprisoned.

The courts employed the Magyar language (which is entirely different from any other European tongue), and

one can readily realize the ease by which the Roumanians could be subjected to the grossest injustice.

No Roumanian schools were permitted, and no Roumanian books or newspapers could be introduced. All offices, large and small, were held by Hungarians, and all public institutions were maintained strictly for the benefit of the Hungarians alone. In short, Roumanians were oppressed, insulted and despised.

From the beginning of the war, the Roumanians in Hungary had only one thought in mind, namely, their liberation, which was also the cry of the Roumanians in Bessarabia, oppressed similarly by Russia. It is well known that Russia coveted the Dardanelles and Constantinople, and her jealousy of Roumania was growing more intense, as their products were very similar and competition was becoming very keen. In the past Russia betrayed Roumania so many times and the Russian aims of conquering Roumania were always so evident that the Roumanians could not have any confidence in their Muscovite neighbor.

Much has been written about corruption in Roumania by German and Russian agents in their endeavors to influence public opinion. It is well to be candid about this matter, for corruption did exist, and those "for sale" (as has been the case even in America) were "bought." The Germans in a single instance paid \$40,000.00 to a journalist, who had been implicated in many shady transactions. Their defense for paying such a large sum for an individual was that they must buy the few dishonest people, as money would not influence those that were honest. While some small number of degenerates have betrayed their country, there was a sincere current of opinion working in opposition to them. With these conflicting forces at work in such a small country as Roumania, with the Russian menace to reckon with, and the fate of Belgium and Servia looming up before them, it is small wonder that a decision to enter the war was postponed for two years.

The German propagandists argued that if they sided with Russia, and Russia were victorious, Roumania would be

exploited in the same way that had happened so frequently in the past. Furthermore, if they made war on Austria, they would have no opportunity for success, for they had no munitions, and it would be impossible for supplies to be sent by the Western allies. On the other hand, if Roumania were to join Germany, she could secure all military supplies with the greatest dispatch through the clear road of the Central Powers.

The German Military Attache, von Hammerstein, in conversation with Roumanian statesmen, summed up the matter as follows:

"Your army is excellent, your soldiers perfect, you lack munitions, your command is not so good. If you join with us, we will supply the munitions and perfect your command, and in two months' time you will regain all the lost Roumanian provinces. However, if you declare war against us, your command will be weaker still, for you will be forced to fight with the Russians, who are also short of officers and lacking in munitions, and in three months' time the entire kingdom will be occupied by German armies."

It is well to mention here that Roumania was entirely lacking in apparatus for modern warfare, such as aeroplanes, machine guns, gas-masks, etc., and her strategical works were all for protection against Russia and not against the Central Powers. Her Russian frontier is only 250 miles long, while the Danube and Carpathian front is over 1,000 miles long.

The arguments of German propagandists seemed so formidable that reply was difficult.

However, the Roumanians were perceptive enough to realize that Germany was the aggressor, and that right and justice were on the side of England and France. Furthermore, Roumania had been aided in establishing her national unity by France, and had largely absorbed French culture. They also had absolute confidence in England, and even though Roumania must suffer by the alliance, still they felt that England would not leave her to the mercy of her enemies.

In the midst of all this confusion and anxiety, Roumania took the step, which was fast becoming inevitable, and declared war on Austria on August 27th, 1916.

The Roumanians were full of enthusiasm, and for a time all went well. Three days after the declaration of war, all the passes to Transylvania were occupied, and in a few weeks one-third of that province was in the hands of the Roumanian army. But the Russians refused any help; they refused even to deliver the machine guns sent to Roumania by France. The Roumanian army, left alone, retreated back to the Carpathians, defending them gallantly for four months. Transylvania was reoccupied by the Hungarians. The joy of the Transylvanians was turned to sorrow. So fierce was the rage of the Hungarians that 15,000 Roumanians, who had sided with their kinsmen, were slain.

In Roumania proper, the people were soon to experience the horrors of warfare with the German-Hungarian-Bulgar army. Bucharest, the Paris of Eastern Europe, renowned the world over for its civic attractiveness, was bombarded constantly by zeppelins and aeroplanes. The Roumanians, however, fought valiantly against the German-Turkish-Bulgarian invaders from the South and the German-Magyar invaders from the North. Bulgaria had been aided by Roumania in the past in gaining her liberty from Turkey, and had made faithful promises never to attack her liberators. However, her promises availed nothing. Dobrogea, to the southeast, was lost; the Roumanians had a struggle on two fronts. Forced to withdraw from Transylvania to defend the southeastern front, they were slowly compelled to retire within their own borders. But reaching that point, they held fast, and all attempts of the enemy to break through the Carpathian passes were for the time being futile. Russia sent some troops, but the officers were so indifferent to the cause that the Roumanians were practically fighting alone. For four months they withstood with terrible losses. Finally, Mackensen entered from the south and Falkenhayn from the northwest. There was no other course for the Roumanians

but to evacuate, and one-half of the kingdom was occupied by the German-Bulgar army, who captured large stores of supplies, destroyed all industry and subjected the people to all kinds of oppression.

It is well to consider here somewhat more fully the causes that led to the reverse of Roumania. First, the allies expected and practically demanded that Roumania should declare herself. Roumania had naturally hesitated, for certain conditions must be fulfilled in order to have any success. For instance, the Russians under Brusilof must join the Roumanian forces in Transylvania, Russia must send aid to keep the Bulgarians out of Dobrogea, and an advance made by Sarrail of the army at Salonika. It was thought that this army was 400,000 strong and well able to attack Bulgaria from the south. However, what happened? Brusilof did not move at all to join the Transylvanian army, only 20,000 instead of 200,000 were sent to defend Dobrogea, and the divisions at Salonika could not take the offensive.

In Russia the man appointed to work in conjunction with Roumania was Stuermer, who has since been proven a German agent and pupil of Rasputin and the Czarina. This traitor had already arranged a peace with Germany, which stipulated that Russia should annex Moldavia, while Austro-Germany and Hungary were to divide Wallachia.

Thus, it is seen why Russia made no effort to save Roumania. Had Russia been true to her trust, she feared that Roumania, if victorious, might demand Bessarabia, and it would not be good policy for Russia to help strengthen Roumania. The Russian commander claimed his orders were simply to make only a military occupation of Moldavia, but in reality the Russians arrogantly took possession of all the Roumanian institutions and were really the masters. When the revolution broke out in Russia, Roumania once more rejoiced, thinking that Russia would again ally herself with the Western powers.

The Roumanian army had in December, 1916, and January, 1917, retired into Moldavia, whose population was more than doubled by the occupation of the army and more

than a million Russians and Roumanian refugees from Dobrogea and Wallachia. Moldavia is small and poor; and the conditions during the severe winter of 1917 were unspeakable. Famine and disease were prevalent and thousands of people perished.

Help from England and France began to arrive in the spring of 1917, and the army was reorganized into a splendid force. Fully equipped for modern warfare, they looked eagerly forward to driving the enemy out of their own country and out of Transylvania. For a time victory appeared certain, but fate seemed to be against Roumania, and Russia failing her in Galicia and Bucovina, she was forced to send troops to Moldavia to defend the front left unprotected by the Russians. The Austro-Germans, taking advantage of the Russian retreat, prepared in July and August, 1917, to invade Moldavia and to advance on Odessa. Hastily, Roumania made preparations to face the situation. Her soldiers fought furiously, and succeeded in holding Mackensen back. The great battle of Marasheshti, on August 1-20, where Mackensen was defeated, belongs to the greatest and bloodiest battles of the great war and will remain as one of the most glorious deeds of arms of the Roumanian history.

But very soon Russia collapsed entirely. The Russians were fraternizing with the enemy. The Roumanians now had to protect themselves from a new foe. Not only did they suffer from depredations of the straggling Russian army, but the Bolsheviki in January, 1918, actually declared war on Roumania. Thus Roumania had to fight in front of her the German-Bulgar-Turk-Magyar forces, and in the rear her allies, the Russians. The Bolsheviki armies were defeated by the Roumanian divisions and even driven out of Bessarabia. But the Germans advanced into Russia to Kieff and surrounded Roumania from every part. Without any hope of help after three months of struggle in this situation, Roumania was forced last March to agree to an ignominious peace.

What is the value of the terrible sacrifices made by the

Roumanians? First, it is of value for principle's sake. Roumania could not conquer her enemies alone, but the wonderful courage of her soldiers was a mighty factor in preserving the morale of her allies. Germany mourned the day she learned that Roumania had joined the Western Powers, and she was compelled to withdraw troops from France to cope with these brave warriors of the East. France realizes that diverting part of Germany's forces to the East helped to save Paris.

Little is known in Great Britain about the Roumanian people. A few English travelers, however, have seen the peasantry at home and know their qualities, and further know what progress this hardy people will make under favorable circumstances.

The Roumanians are loyal, intelligent, industrious and good-hearted, and for this reason are envied and hated. They have borne the brunt of ill-treatment and oppression for ages, first by the Huns, then during the middle ages by the Magyars and in modern times by the Germans, Hungarians and Russians. It seems as if history repeats itself and that ancient Germanic tribe hatred of latin nations reappears in modern Teutonic barbarity towards Roumania.

However, since England, France, Italy and America begin to appreciate what Roumania has accomplished, they will not suffer her to be further oppressed by the modern barbarous nations of Germany, Bulgaria, Austria and Turkey. Now that the great struggle is ended Roumania will show her Western sisters that she played an important role in the war and will become a great power under new and more favorable circumstances.

Traiasca Romania! (God save Roumania!)

